

In the United States Court of Federal Claims

OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

No. 17-1078V

UNPUBLISHED

KATHYRN JOHNSON,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Chief Special Master Corcoran

Filed: December 5, 2019

Special Processing Unit (SPU);
Damages Decision Based on Proffer;
Influenza (Flu) Vaccine; Guillain-
Barre Syndrome (GBS)

Lawrence R. Cohan, Anapol Weiss, Philadelphia, PA, for petitioner.

Sarah Christina Duncan, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for respondent.

DECISION AWARDING DAMAGES¹

On August 8, 2017, Kathryn Johnson filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*,² (the “Vaccine Act”). Petitioner alleges that she suffered Guillain-Barré syndrome (“GBS”) as a result of an influenza (“flu”) vaccine administered to her on October 18, 2016. Petition at 1. The case was assigned to the Special Processing Unit of the Office of Special Masters.

On October 25, 2018, a ruling on entitlement was issued, finding Petitioner entitled to compensation for GBS. On December 5, 2019, Respondent filed a proffer on award of compensation (“Proffer”) indicating Petitioner should be awarded \$150,000.00, for her actual and projected pain and suffering. Proffer at 1-2. In the Proffer, Respondent represented that Petitioner agrees with the proffered award. *Id.* Based on the record as a whole, I find that Petitioner is entitled to an award as stated in the Proffer.

¹ Because this unpublished ruling contains a reasoned explanation for the action in this case, I am required to post it on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002. 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2012) (Federal Management and Promotion of Electronic Government Services). **This means the ruling will be available to anyone with access to the internet.** In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), Petitioner has 14 days to identify and move to redact medical or other information, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. If, upon review, I agree that the identified material fits within this definition, I will redact such material from public access.

² National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755. Hereinafter, for ease of citation, all “§” references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2012).

Pursuant to the terms stated in the attached Proffer, **I award Petitioner a lump sum payment of \$150,000.00, (for her actual and projected pain and suffering) in the form of a check payable to Petitioner.** This amount represents compensation for all damages that would be available under § 15(a).

The clerk of the court is directed to enter judgment in accordance with this decision.³

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Brian H. Corcoran

Brian H. Corcoran
Chief Special Master

³ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), entry of judgment can be expedited by the parties' joint filing of notice renouncing the right to seek review.

On August 8, 2017, Kathryn Johnson (“petitioner”) filed a petition for compensation under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, [42 U.S.C. §§ 300aa-1](#) to -34 (“Vaccine Act” or “Act”), as amended. Petitioner alleged that she suffered Guillain-Barré syndrome (“GBS”) as a result of an influenza (“flu”) vaccine administered to her on October 18, 2016. Petition at 1. On October 25, 2018, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (“respondent”) filed a Rule 4(c) Report recommending that compensation be awarded, and the Chief Special Master issued a Ruling on Entitlement finding petitioner entitled to compensation the same day. [ECF No. 32](#); [ECF No. 33](#).

A. Pain and Suffering

Respondent proffers that Kathryn Johnson, should be awarded \$150,000.00 in actual and projected pain and suffering. This amount reflects that the award for projected pain and suffering has been reduced to net present value. *See* [42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15\(a\)\(4\)](#). Petitioner agrees.

II. Form of the Award

Petitioner is a competent adult. Evidence of guardianship is not required in this case. Respondent recommends that the compensation provided to Kathryn Johnson should be made through a lump sum payment as described below and requests that the Chief Special Master's decision and the Court's judgment award the following¹: \$150,000.00 for actual and projected pain and suffering, in the form of a check payable to petitioner, Kathryn Johnson.

III. Summary of Recommended Payments Following Judgment

Lump sum payable to petitioner, Kathryn Johnson: **\$ 150,000.00**

Respectfully submitted,

JOSEPH H. HUNT
Assistant Attorney General

C. SALVATORE D'ALESSIO
Acting Director
Torts Branch, Civil Division

CATHARINE E. REEVES
Deputy Director
Torts Branch, Civil Division

HEATHER L. PEARLMAN
Assistant Director
Torts Branch, Civil Division

s/ Sarah C. Duncan
SARAH C. DUNCAN
Trial Attorney
Torts Branch, Civil Division
U.S. Department of Justice
P.O. Box 146
Benjamin Franklin Station
Washington, D.C. 20044-0146
Tel: (202) 514-9729
Fax: (202) 616-4310

DATED: December 5, 2019

¹ Should petitioner die prior to entry of judgment, the parties reserve the right to move the Court for appropriate relief. In particular, respondent would oppose any award for future lost earnings and future pain and suffering.